

THE COST OF ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WAMP. Madam Speaker, over the last 14 years that I have had the privilege to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives, I have tried not to be excessively partisan. Frankly, having grown up a Democrat and become a Republican during the Reagan movement in this country, I feel like neither party has an exclusive on integrity, neither party has an exclusive on ideas.

But I feel compelled, Madam Speaker, to come to the floor today to say that one issue right now is burning in the American public like no other issue, and that is the cost of energy. This morning, the economy is sliding rapidly downward, primarily because of energy.

Now there's talk in the House here and in the Congress of a second stimulus bill that includes a variety of things that the new majority, the Democrat majority, has cobbled together. But the most important thing we could do for the American economy is to pass the American Energy Act, which is the Republican bill that opens up all of our oil and gas resources in this country. That is the most important thing we could do for the economy. For jobs and productivity and exports and standing our country back up economically, it is the most important thing.

Yet today it's going to be suppressed again because the Democratic energy alternative is a very limited, watered-down effort, designed, honestly, to just give some of their members a vote so they can say, Oh, we voted to drill a little bit and go home to campaign. Yet their idea of economic stimulus is going to be more government, more spending, more borrowed money, and it's really unfortunate.

It's really unfortunate because the most important thing we could do is just pass this robust energy bill, and in our bill we share the revenues with the States that opt in, that want to have Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas exploration in the zone where the oil and gas is, in the Gulf or off the West Coast, this resource that's been locked up for a long period of time, that we now know has to be unlocked, and Hurricane Ike was another reminder over the weekend that we need to diversify our supply, increase our supply, and have a robust approach to this, and not a very limited approach.

I will tell you where the problem lies. The American people are really frustrated. I have local officials calling me every day, angry, because the people they represent don't have anywhere to turn. Gas in east Tennessee was \$4.99 a gallon this weekend. People on fixed incomes are hurting and hurting and hurting and they wonder what the heck is going on in Congress and how is this happening. I have got to tell you, it's called extremism.

Now environmentalism is a good thing if it's a responsible, logical, com-

monsense resource management idea. It's a good thing. But extreme environmentalism is the problem. Extreme environmentalism has locked up our energy resources for a long period of time. And these Sierra Club types lobby the Congress and they score these Members and they say, If you don't vote with us all the time, you're somehow a radical person in the back pockets of oil and gas, and all this. Let me tell you, they're extreme.

On every new permit in this country, every single one for oil and gas exploration, they have immediately filed a lawsuit to tie it up in court, and they have got an unlimited supply of lawyers to sue to keep us from bringing any new oil and gas resources on the market. That is a huge problem. It's called extremism in the environmental community.

For years and years, they have been lobbying this place, and I have been here, and I have seen it. Now it's come home to roost. These are our problems.

Today, we need to give the Republicans a vote on the American Energy Act today in the House, and let's unleash the economy again and lower the cost of energy before it's too late, guys.

Ladies and gentlemen of the House, this is an important day. It's not about politics, it's about the people we represent and the fact they have nowhere else to turn. We need action. We need it today. This is not a partisan thing. There are really responsible people on both sides of the aisle that need to come together. And the liberals from San Francisco don't need to govern national policy.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 44 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

□ 1000

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PASTOR) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God of creation and reconciliation, called to address the effects of the hurricane season upon the Nation, we must also face honestly the economic fractures of the present moment. Monetary matters, just as natural disasters, call us to be people of faith, hope and love.

The biblical vision of creation, covenant and community summons people to stand strong and together in a time of tension between promise and fulfillment. Positioned here by You, we com-

mit ourselves to solidarity with those suffering the most from hurricane and from economic situations. The ordinary laborer cannot distance himself from the speculative investor. All are frightened by the shaken terrain, and all must find new ground where they can stand together.

As people of the covenant, Lord, we can confront those attitudes and ways of acting which institutionalize injustice even when they are discovered within our very selves. For our quest for economic and social justice arises from faith, is sustained by hope, and seeks to heal a broken world that still seeks Your lasting justice and loving kindness. Be with us now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GINGREY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 2135) "An Act to prohibit the recruitment or use of child soldiers, to designate persons who recruit or use child soldiers as inadmissible aliens, to allow the deportation of persons who recruit or use child soldiers, and for other purposes."